

The King Snake Tradition

Fasting the Heart

Preamble

The martial path which I've followed to developing my own style began with taking to a Confucianist Way of Life. My work was to study and create a manner in which I could flourish with very little. I chose self-education when I was twenty-two.

This could have bared few fruits as the path in the martial arts is in training. My progress was somewhat stunted. But my efforts to create a life for myself were stimulated with side projects and diversions which enriched my mind. Eventually, I still got to where I needed to be having developed my own style and I had many experiences to draw from that I felt confident I could follow through and do what I had always dreamed I would.

Time spent doing bicycle touring allowed me to have an experiment with learning a trade. I worked in bicycle shops as a mechanic for a few seasons. This included volunteering at Bike Recycle of Vermont under the tutelage of Dan Hock and Mark Rowell. I also did an apprenticeship at a used bike shop which was run out of a two car garage in Grand Isle.

However, it wasn't until my thirties that my ambition and hopes to take an idea for a martial arts style began to materialize. My friends were all artists and I was an aspiring poet who didn't know that what I really needed to do was write a martial arts book. We had a community and hub for activities which inspired me to pursue further to do what I always wanted.

The community which I was part of was called The Clustermind Collaborative—we were all street artists. I began to idealize a way of life I picked up with the help of my friends. This became The Discordant—an ideology of a fictional society which I created—meant to create a street artist renaissance. We lived what I turned into ideology, having, a bit of a renaissance in Brattleboro, Vermont which lasted years.

There were festivals in the parks; an underground artist hostel in the basement of a church; and poetry slams. It was some of the best years of my life and constituted the founding years to what would my most important work.

Six Hardships for Martial Training

Isolation

Isolation will improve your minds ability to find stimulation in meager portions—and is fundamental to knowledge of self. I've had several periods of isolation in my life-time and have come to the realization that I'm meant to be asexual.

We are not meant to only be stimulated in social settings and the stillness and slowness of isolation can be blissful and sobering. It's meant that we find respite and comfort in times which are not hurried by social engagement giving our mind the ability to unravel. This can be manifest in both healthy and unhealthy behavior but either way it will contribute to intelligent thought.

Propertyless

The Discordants is an outline of a propertyless society organized around an alternative education scene. It's a good manner in which you may economize your own labor that you choose to have times in your life in which you are propertyless—or choose to live off a modest means.

Time spent without television and reading books from the library without the distraction of a car can help you to focus on yourself. It's stimulating to feel that you only have what you need. It allows for discipline and patience as you allow life to carry you in a restful pace as opposed to grinding to stay ahead.

We need times that we do not work for others and only work for ourselves and this can be fruitful even if it's not lucrative. It can be spiritual and humbling.

Radicalized Simplicity

Radicalized simplicity is a means of ecological and economic sustainability. It's important if one wishes for their consumption habits to reflect their social consciousness that they be able to minimize. We care for ourselves as we care for our environment.

In radicalized simplicity, we may find that we can share a home with someone whom we have a close relationship with. We will not need any means of transportation beyond a bicycle. And can live off a very modest income with little worry.

The changing of behaviors around consumption will improve clarity in thought. It will allow that we can have a caring attitude towards the planet.

Self-Education

One basic advantage to self-education as opposed to college is that it will not require going into debt. Many personal finance experts recommend avoiding debt and frugality as a means of creating wealth. It's basic disadvantage is that it's a less direct path to a career.

This can be a chance to have misadventures and mishaps which can strengthen our intelligence. What one gets out of self-education is that we find inspiration from our favorite writers. Books become a means of learning of others who've found a manner to lead inspiring and passionate lives.

Homelessness

One of the basic rites of passage in the street artist community which I was part of was to have had a period of homelessness. Much of the misadventure which may be had in having had a time of homelessness teaches that life can have joys in compromised conditions.

A time spent living on the streets will have yielded stories to tell. And memories and friends which will last a lifetime. Many of the homeless are some of the most compassionate and forgiving people you will ever meet.

It's a joy to get to know them and share emotions and good times. A time on the streets will be difficult. There will be drama and heartache. You will feel the hardship of not having a home and it will be real.

Incarcerations

Jail time will strengthen a person's resolve if they have the discipline to see through that a setback is not going to permanently stop them from living a good life. We learn from mistakes and misadventures and are more careful to not repeat what has set us back.

Wisdom comes from having had struggles and difficulties and finding the strength to see the other side of these challenges. The hardship of having done jail time will have given the opportunity to change what has held you back and been your mistakes. You will see that you can make yourself better by not repeating your mistakes.

There's a lesson to be had in being young, once, and challenging yourself to go beyond what you thought you had to.

Fasting the Heart

Fasting the heart is a means in which we allow ourselves to live without fighting to change what is a

part of our nature. We become more ourselves as we learn to let ourselves move through the heart rather than the mind.

It becomes a blessing to find respite in simplicity, and family, and having loving relationships with ourselves. It's the character of a person which must be flushed out allowing for their florid intelligence to beam into their lives and allow them to be rich. It's a richness of the mind and spirit which will guide the person in how they feel and act.

Choosing to fast the heart with a simpler and more humble posture in this life adds to emotional content and vitality of spirit. It feels good to have had misadventures and hardships when its all over. But to begin anew we welcome what lies ahead, knowing, we don't control it.

Conclusion

If you endure through all six of these hardships for martial training you will strengthen the mind and your resolve. You will improve your character and spirit. You'll learn to fast the heart. In this, there will be a fountain which replenishes you when your tank is empty.

All six of these are necessary for following a martial path which is keeping with my doctrine which I outlined in The King Snake Tradition. It becomes the means of carving a path to studying The Discordant model and finding in our doctrine the ability to have intelligence. There's a martial education out of forging your character with these six hardships.

You'll learn to live modestly and be able to focus on what's important to your strength and character. You'll have survived. Fasting the heart will bring out of a person what they already had inside them which they only did not see clearly. It's revealing.